



Columbia Values Diversity Celebration

An Annual Celebration of the Life and Teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Student Writings Program

Students in grades 4-12 are invited to submit their original writings for possible publication in the 2016 Columbia Values Diversity Celebration Student Writings Booklet. This booklet will be distributed to over 1,000 people at the annual community celebration on January 14, 2016 and published on the Celebration website at: www.GoColumbiaMo.com (Search: Diversity Celebration)

Theme

The theme for the 23rd annual Columbia Values Diversity Celebration is: "Unity in Our Community." Because Columbia is a city of many ethnic groups, religions, cultures, and opinions, it is important that all community members know that their story and their voice are important and valued. Submit an essay or poem describing how there is unity in our community despite our differences.

Writing Suggestions

To help you get started, consider using one of the following prompts:

- *Narrative: Write a story, real or imagined, describing how diverse individuals within our city learn to work together to improve their community.*
- *Persuasive: In what ways is there already unity among diverse groups within Columbia and in what ways does our community still have work to do to better unite all citizens?*
- *Expository: Research and describe an individual, organization, or event in our community that has and/or continues to actively promote unity in Columbia.*

Submission Guidelines

Students in grades 4-12 throughout the Columbia area are eligible to participate. Student writings should not be more than one page long typewritten or two pages handwritten. An independent selection committee will choose selected writings from all grade levels for publication. The booklet will be distributed at the Columbia Values Diversity Celebration on Thursday, January 14, 2016 and published on the celebration website. Four or five students will be selected with the opportunity to read their works and be featured in a video produced by the City Channel, which will be played at the Celebration as well as broadcast after the event.

Students should include: name, age, grade level, teacher's name, and school on the essay/poetry submission. Entries will not be accepted without this information.

The deadline for submitting writings is Friday, November 13, 2015.

Send or deliver essay/poetry entries to:

<u>Columbia Public Schools students</u> Michelle Baumstark Community Relations Columbia Public Schools 1818 West Worley Columbia, MO 65203	<u>All other students</u> Columbia Values Diversity Celebration c/o Office of Cultural Affairs 300 S. Providence Rd. Columbia, MO 65205 E-Mail: OCA@GoColumbiaMO.com
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Contact

For more information please contact the Office of Cultural Affairs:

Phone: (573) 874-6386

E-mail: OCA@GoColumbiaMO.com

Web: www.GoColumbiaMo.com (Search: Diversity Celebration)